

3 July 2024

Hon Brooke van Velden  
Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington 6160  
New Zealand

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the 19 organisations listed below, we are calling on you to save lives and ban engineered stone in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Engineered stone is a very harmful product. The dust from cutting, grinding or drilling engineered stone can lead to the occupational disease silicosis, a scarring of the lungs. There is no safe exposure to this silica dust.

Silicosis is a debilitating disease for which there is no cure. It can be fatal.

Unions, public health experts and health and safety specialists have continued to warn you about the harm caused by this product, and that a ban is necessary.

Everyone in New Zealand has the right to expect a safe workplace and to be able to come home safely to their family at the end of the day. You can give working people and their whānau, as well as businesses, consumers and the wider public, the certainty that working people's health is the priority.

Occupational disease is the biggest killer of workers in New Zealand. A ban will save lives.

And the work is already done. Australia's ban came into effect on 1 July 2024. That ban was built on broad consultation, economic analysis and best available science.

Engineered stone is a fashion product. And alternatives to engineered stone are readily available. A fashionable kitchen should not come at the cost of lives.

The decision is easy: implement the ban on the use, supply and manufacture of engineered stone products.

Ngā mihi,

New Zealand Council of Trade Unions  
Te Kauae Kaimahi  
E tū  
Public Service Association  
FIRST  
Unite  
Maritime Union of New Zealand  
New Zealand Meatworkers Union  
New Zealand Nurses Organisation  
Rail & Maritime Transport Union  
NZEI Te Rua Roa  
NZ Professional Firefighters Union

Dairy Workers Union  
Construction Health and Safety New Zealand  
ACC Futures Coalition  
Orange Umbrella  
Cancer Council Australia  
Te Hā Ora Asthma and Respiratory Foundation NZ  
The Australian and New Zealand Society of Occupational Medicine  
New Zealand Occupational Health Nurses Association

